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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 334. JULY, 1934.

JUSTICE. TIME. EVOLUTION.

'The Lord is merciful for He is just,"—PSALM LXII., 12.

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NOTES AND NEWS.

"A Scotsman keeps the Sabbath Day and every other blessed thing he can lay his hands upon," was a remark made by the late Rev. Alex. Gordon at the bi-centenary of a congregation, one of whose first ministers was a Scotsman who knew how to keep the hearts of the people. The fourth minister of that particular congregation, the Rev. Zechariah Tidmouse, grandson of one of the ejected 2,000, when appointed, was asked if he repudiated the Popish doctrine of "the *celibracy* of the clergy," for so it is recorded! With reference, however, to the keeping of the Sabbath day, Emerson said, "Christianity has given us two things, Sunday and preaching." Though Emerson—fortunately for literature - retired from the ministry, he was exemplary in his attendance at church His seat was in the gallery at the front, and whatever the merits of the sermon were, he listened with close attention. The late Rev. Joseph Freeston heard Emerson lecture at the Athenæum, Manchester; but somehow was not particularly impressed with him: But Emerson hadn't his great reputation in those days.

* * *

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, "I have a little plant called 'reverence,' and once a week I take care to water it by going to church." The old compulsions with reference to church-going have, so far as our denomination is concerned, long ago vanished; and a little girl referring to Unitarians, said, "Oh! those are the people that don't go to church!" But the habit of church-going is a tremendous help when it has become part and parcel of one's life.

* * *

At a restaurant table in Belfast, where cronies foregather on Mondays, the conversation can be heard all over the room, "Well, what sort of a sermon did you have yesterday?" Preachers, beware! more attention may be paid to you than you consider.

* * *

Gladstone scrupulously kept Sunday as a day of rest, not even writing a letter on that day, and he attributed his good health and mental vigour to his Sunday observance.

SUBSIDY FUND.

The Treasurer begs to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following subscription:—

Mr. J. T. Burnside, The Hill, Secon, Ballymoney ... £0 4 0

Contributions should be addressed to the Manager, Rev. A. Davison, Dromore, by whom they will be gratefully acknowledged.

THE DIVINE WISDOM:

"Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created, even as Thou renewest the face of the earth.—Psalm civ. 29-30.

Published on the **Fourth** Saturday of the month. Copy should be in before the **21st** at the latest. Editor: Rev. John Barron, Ballywalter, Co. Down.

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian can be obtained at the Depository, 35 Rosemary Street, Belfast.

It would be a great convenience if remittances now due are sent to Rev. Alfred Davison, Dromore.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

The Sunday School Conference was held in Downpatrick on Saturday, June 2nd. The day was gloriously fine and a large number, estimated at over 400, came together for the occasion.

The meeting was presided over by the Moderator, the Rev. J. J. Magill, B.A., and the devotional service was conducted by the local minister, the Rev. James McNeil. In his presidential address, the Moderator stressed the importance of Sunday School work and of the great and many opportunities it afforded to the teacher to shape the young mind and heart of the scholar in the spirit and life of Jesus Christ. He referred in feeling terms to those of our fellowship who have recently passed away from our midst and who never missed the Conferences, namely Miss Eileen Andrews and Miss Maggie Dickson. Apologies for absence were received from two of our veterans, who have borne the burden and the heat of many years of service in our church, namely the Rev. J. H. Bibby and A. O. Ashworth. May they be spared to us for many a year for we regard them with affection.

The Rev. Thomas Munn, spoke eloquently upon his chosen subject, "The Bible as a Text book for the Sunday School." He referred to its incomparable work among the Sacred Scriptures of the world. Its history and drama—its poems and songs—its prophecies and its Gospel afford a field of study, of delight and spiritual uplift such as cannot be found in any other literature. In an eloquent speech the Rev. W. H. T. Tilson proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the speaker for his helpful and inspiring paper.

The Rev. J H. Ewbank, B.A., B.D., presented his adjudication of the essays that came to hand, and declared the following as winners; *Junior Class*—Albert Larmour, Raloo—Morris Cobain, Stanhope Street, and Leslie McMullan, Downpatrick.

Intermediate Class—J. G. Davies, Comber, Vera Nelson, Larne, and Kathleen Nelson, Larne. Miss Jordan gracefully presented the the prizes to the successful competitors

A cordial message was received from the congregations of Newtownards and Greyabbey inviting the Conference to meet at Greyabbey in June, 1935. The invitation was heartily accepted. The kind friends at Downpatrick entertained all present to a very enjoyable tea at the close of the Conference, for which hospitality the warm thanks of those present were voiced by the Rev. John Begg. It was a successful Conference in every way and we all felt that "it was good to be there."

(FROM *Down Recorder*)

Irish Nonsubscribing Presbyterians, mustered in strength at Downpatrick in lovely weather on Saturday, June 2nd, for the annual Sunday-school conference, and the hundreds of young folk together with adult friends and clergy were welcomed by Rev. J. McNeil and his congregation at Stream street.

Rev. J. J. Magill, of Rademon, presided at the conference. After the hymn, 'Lord, speak to me," and prayer by Rev. J. McNeil, Miss Jordan, the local congregational secretary, distributed the awards for an essay competition. The first prize-winner was from Larne, the second from the Domestic Mission, Belfast, and the third was Leslie McMullan, of Downpatrick. Then came a cogent address by Rev. T. Munn, of Cairncastle. "The Bible as a text-book for the Sunday-school," which evoked an edifying discussion on the part of Revs. W. H. Tilson, of Greyabbey, J. A. Kelly, of Dunmurry, and J. G. Davies, of Comber. The closing hymn, "Forward, be our watchword," was heartily sung, Miss Mabel Dickson being at the organ. Later, a happy sociable hour was spent over tea in the Assembly Hall.

BODEL-MACKENZIE BENEVOLENT FUND.

"At the election of beneficiaries to be held on the 13th September, 1934, the Trustees regret that it is not possible to elect many beneficiaries as only a small amount is available for grants to applicants."

A request has been sent to every minister of the Association of Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians, to announce on Sundays, August 5th and 12th, the election of beneficiaries.

Grants not exceeding £20 are made to spinsters of 55 years and upwards who are in reduced circumstances, who for five years prior to date of application have been members of a church connected with the Association.

God's power set the stars in their courses, restful, reliable, and stedfast. His mind created the grace and symmetry of the larch, the silver birch and the poplar. His joy set birds singing. His serenity produced the night sky, and His love understands you better than you understand yourself.—ANON.

THE YORK CONVOCATION.

We learn from *Daily Express*, that Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A , B.D., preaching at Liverpool on Sunday morning, June 10th, said; "I should like to express our gratitude to the Bishop of Liverpool," he said, "for that memorable plea before Convocation, which means more to us than we can ever say. We have good reason to know that many a wall of prejudice and misunderstanding fell down flat at the sound of that solitary but valiant trumpet."

> "But all that the ban means is a pause, a halt, a looking round. The pilgrimage is not over. It will go on. I am convinced that the official ecclesiastical mind is lagging a long way behind that of spiritual members of the Church.
>
> "The best and finest Christians have always been heretics on some point."

Reply to the Convocation of York

There was a sequel on Sunday night, June 17th, to the controversy which has arisen from the fact of two Unitarian preachers (the Rev. Dr. L. P. Jacks and the Rev. Lawrence Redfern) having delivered addresses in Liverpool Cathedral.

A letter from Dr. Jacks to the Dean of Liverpool (Dr. Dwelly) and the Rev. Professor Raven, a canon theolgoian of Liverpool, was read in the Cathedral by Canon Davey. The letter thanked Dean Dwelly and Professor Raven "most heartily for explaining in terms so comprehensive and lucid what it is that you in Liverpool Cathedral believe in, aim at and hope for," and added: "The general effect of your letter on my own mind is to confirm a long-held conviction that unless the churches of Christendom are able to transcend their institutional selfishness, their corporate self-seeking and uncharitable relations among themselves, learning to help rather than to hinder one another, and to bear each others burdens instead of increasing them—unless, that is, they are willing to put religion before church policy—the days of organised Christianity are most assuredly numbered."

"How seldom has any one of them played the part of the good Samaritan to any other, how often that of the priest and Levite, or worse? But here we have in the ideals you set before Liverpool Cathedral, and in the action you have so courageously taken to achieve them, a proof, not devitalised by reservations, that these deplorable habits are being overcome, and, what is more, that the Church of England is capable of giving a lead in overcoming them."

"Other proofs are happily forthcoming to the same effect of which the present is not the occasion to speak. Would that the Convocation of York had been minded to seize the opportunity for creating one more in response to the noble appeal of Bishop David—a name that will not be readily forgotten among the worshippers of God in spirit and in truth the world over."

Dr. Jacks adds that Unitarians must now regard themselves as definitely excluded from Anglican pulpits. This, taken in itself, he states, is a matter of no great importance either to Unitarians or to the public at large. From another point of view, however, the matter has an importance well nigh impossible to exaggerate. It arises from the fact that in order to effect and justify the exclusion of Unitarians Convocation was compelled (having no alternative) to define Christianity in terms of Nicene theology.

Dr. Jack's concluded:—"Let the Holy Catholic Church be defined as committed to the Nicene formula, and out the Unitarians go—simple enough, but most unfortunately suicidal, for it has now become sufficiently apparent to all whose eyes are open that a religion which cannot live without the creed of Nicea to support it is a dying religion."

Canon Davey also read a letter of apology which the Dean and Professor Raven had sent to Dr. Jacks. In this letter they stated: "We beg leave to express publicly to you our deep sense of regret and remorse for the humiliation to which our invitation has exposed you. That as a result of your fine spirit of Christian neighbourliness your status as a Christian should have been impugned, and out of an act of fellowship there should have arisen this outburst of odium is to us all a matter of which we are bitterly ashamed. Anyone who reads your sermon and has appreciated your teaching will feel that this issue has been, indeed, a conflict between the spirit and the letter of discipleship, and those who note the contrast between the Archbishop's utterances on this occasion and his speeches in former years—and notably at the Church Congress in Southport in 1927—will have their faith in the value of episcopacy and institutionalised religion rudely shaken."

Proceeding to state the ideals and principles on which they have acted, Dean Dwelly and Canon Raven say: "We may begin by referring to the event of which this present year is the centenary. In 1834 Frederick Denison Maurice was ordained deacon in the

Church of England. Born and brought up as a Unitarian, he brought into the Anglican communion a breadth of sympathy, freedom of spirit and saintliness of character which vitalised and inspired the whole life of our Church. Historians, as they are able to see the religious history of the 19th century in perspective, are agreeing that Maurice, as a prophet of God, a religious reformer, theologian, and pioneer, was one of the greatest figures of the time. Our Church is beginning to recognise and acknowledge his creative influence. It can never repay the debt that it owes to Unitarianism for him. It is the principles whose application is thus illustrated that our cathedral has adopted as its own."

The letter adds—"For ourselves, while we recognise the right of any society to impose tests upon its members, and are not inclined to dispute the value for ourselves of the traditional creed, we must make it plain that an attempt to foreclose the present inquiries by reference to ancient formula seems a matter damaging to intellectual honesty and hard to reconcile with any belief in a progressive revelation or any true concepts of the nature of God's dealings with mankind."

The letter also states—"Two points may perhaps be added. The invitation to you was not an innovation. On the occasion of the centenary of the British Association, General Smuts, who, like yourself, is free from any creedal or denominational allegiance, gave an address at the same service as that at which you spoke. The vast congregation heard then—as it heard from you—words of mature and profoundly moving wisdom, words which were a true "prophecy." On the same occasion in our prayers we gave thanks by name for the work of Charles Darwin and many others. For this, surely a more serious break with tradition than our present action, we received no criticism; indeed we were both privately and publicly encouraged by the same authorities who have now been sitting in judgment on us."

S. & J. HEWITT

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The General Synod Lecture.

The Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A., B.D., whose occupancy of the pulpit of Liverpool Cathedral on the invitation of the Dean has aroused such a storm of controversy in religious circles, delivered an address on Tuesday evening, June 19th, in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast. His subject was "Our place in the great Christian tradition." The Rev. J. J. Magill presided.

Mr. Redfern said that few things promised more for the future of religion than the firm conviction now being spoken by some of the strongest and clearest minds in all churches, that the life of the spirit was a life with realities, values and standards of its own—not a mere dim replica of material things.

The tremendous discovery which the world of religion to-dav was making—of which the Liverpool Cathedral controversy was one expression—was that a religion which aspired to be free was under the only true authority there was—the authority of the spirit. Ever and again the representatives of the old order, entirely sincere and almost fanatical in their sincerity, persuaded themselves that the authority which they were upholding was the only authority; was indeed sacrosanct, and that the spirit of liberty meant nothing but lawlessness and disintegration. They contrived by precedent and every other way to build a more effective bulwark against the freedom of the spirit. They quoted their ecclesiastical laws. They forgot that in its beginnings the Christian Gospel was simply good tidings of great joy, to comfort, guide and redeem heart-hungry men.

It was not a scheme of theology for intellectual disputants, or a philosophical programme for the builders of an ecclesiastical institution. What its Founder meant it to be was a great and growing peace-making influence among the striving and warring peoples of the earth.

Referring to their vision of the Holy Catholic Church, he said, that which originated and perpetuated the lamentable divisions which had over and again distracted the Church, were questions of external administration, or propositions which lay quite beyond the reach of demonstration or even comprehension. They were questions of great political and administrative interest, but questions which had no essential relation to Christian discipleship. The same thing must be said of the forms and ceremonies which had divided the Church.

Behind the differences in theological belief, which were real and important, arose one great and paramount issue, which was more important than them all. It was an issue which the logic of events was once more compelling the Christian world to face. "Was it necessary to profess belief in this dogma or in that before one could be a true follower of Christ ?"

They had realised that the desire to be free was as sacred and divine as any word of the Lord had ever been in the human heart. They had realised, too, that freedom was in itself no positive value. The savage was free, and the madman and the sweeping wind and the devouring flame. Freedom in any fully human sense was freedom to be bound, and even religious freedom could only be explained and justified in terms of obligation. The strength of every mastering religion had always been found in its obligation.

A religion which made things easy was doomed ; it made no appeal, roused no response, for there was an instinct in all men which told them that perfection came only with obedience. Laxness and ease of performance acted only as discouragements to willingness and zeal. The liberty of the Gospel was always described by its first preachers as liberty to exchange one yoke for another, the latter more attractive because, in some respects, more severe.

A free church was not a mere school of freethinkers with a kind of general tendency. It was a congregation of faithful men and women with a particular purpose and ideal in which they believed, and where there were faithful men and women who were also free—there may be no restrictions, but there was restraint, and there were obligations. In the truly free Christian Church search and research must go hand-in-hand. Reversion was very often confused with reaction and innovation with reform.

Their meeting-houses were established by men who had a firm belief in the imperatives of religion, and if they were not Puritans still, not in any raw bigoted, or Philistine sense, but in the largest and best sense—firm for principle, unshaken in loyalty, strong in duty, true to the imperatives of religion—if they were not Puritans still, then they were nothing. If they thought it did not matter what they worshipped, or how they worshipped, just because they were free, then their day was done ; the spirit of their founders was dead, and they might as well ring down the curtain.

The thing that could save them was vision and discipline ; the vision of a Church so free that it stood with open doors and faced every way like a city set on a hill ; fulfilling its open trust by open use ; a centre of many activities ; a three-fold type and embodiment of worship, and discipl ne and service ; a home of many sympathies and wide affections, securing to all who sought it freedom of conscience and freedom also from small scrutinies which often bound and cramped the life of small administrations.

This was the last of times to revel in sectarian strife. It was the time to reaffirm the faith that united ; to revive the authority of a spiritual religion ; to rejoice in the liberty where with Christ had made them free ; to welcome the affinity of all souls which had abandoned the controversies which divided and were turning to the discipleship which united and redeemed. Creeds and theologies and sentences of exclusion come and go. Controversies disturbed for a time the hearts of the living and the dust of the dead. But prayers were said, praise was sung, tears were loosed, and somehow in their divers temples they became one Christian brotherhood. That was the true Church from which no man could be excluded save by the death of goodness in his own breast.

— The Unitarian and —

Free Christian Laymen's League.

——:o:——

BELFAST CHAPTER

meets in the CENTRAL HALL, ROSEMARY STREET, at 8 p m , Third Thursday of the month, October to May, inclusive.

OBJECTS (inter alia).

To encourage laymen to take a more active part in the work of the Churches.

To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

The Committee invite those who are not already members to join. The minimum subscription is 2/6, and further particulars may be obtained from—

MR. J. H. GILLILAND,

35 Rosemary St., Belfast, Hon. Sec.

MR. J. EDMONDSON, Jr., Asst. Hon, Sec.

19 Lime Street, Belfast.

OBITUARIES.

Mrs. MacGiffin.

The oldest living link of the All Souls' congregation, Belfast, with the past has been broken by the death of Mrs. MacGiffin in her 95th year. Until indisposed by old age, she took a keen interest in the affairs of the Church and played a prominent part in the congregational activities. The older members will think of her primarily as an active and energetic helper in all the various spheres of congregational activity, while the younger members will see her as a kind and gracious old lady with a personality that was unusually attractive. To all, however, the memory of Mrs. MacGiffin will be sweet with the fragrance that always comes from a fruitful life devoted to Christian ideals.

Miss E. L. Andrews.

We record with deep sorrow and regret the death of Miss Eileen L. Andrews, Inla, Comber, which occurred on Saturday, 20th May. She had but a brief illness and her passing came as a great shock to her friends and to all the Comber people, for Miss Eileen was universally respected and beloved. She was a lady of excepticnal grace of manner and greeted everyone with a pleasant word. Miss Andrews was an able linguist and her reading was both wide and deep. She was a Unitarian by conviction and she was ever ready, if called upon, to give a reason for her cherished faith. The name of Andrews has figured in the annals of our Comber Church since its foundation, and Miss Eileen was true to the best traditions associated with that excellent family.

For many years, right on to the end, Miss Andrews taught in the Sunday School and her work in this sphere cannot be estimated. The little scholars will miss her specially, for she was devoted to them, and on the occasions of the Christmas Treat and the Summer Excursion, Miss Eileen was as young as the youngest and joined in all their games.

She served for many years as Hon. Secretary to the Ladies' Committee of the church and took her full share in every activity connected with the congregation. Her services outside the church were numerous and significant with the thoroughness that characterised all her work. For many years she was hon. treasurer of the Comber Women Unionist Association and latterly she served as hon. secretary to the Comber District Nursing Society. Every good cause had her active support and sympathy, and we mourn the passing of a loyal and faithful friend.

We extend to her two brothers, Messrs. N. P. and Cecil Andrews, our heartfelt sympathy in there sorrow and irreparable loss.

Miss Ellen Margaret McRobert.

The death occurred with startling suddenness, at her residence, Drumaghlis, of Miss Ellen Margaret McRobert, a devoted member of the Rademon Congregation. For some time she had not been too strong, but the end came unexpectedly. She was sixty-eight years of age, and belonged to one of the oldest families of the district. Accustomed to the work of a farm, her life was frugal and industrious, and though not opulent, her circumstances were comfortable. In her support of any cause that met with her approval, she was open-handed and generous. The congregation of Rademon had not a more faithful member. Her pew was never vacant when health permitted attendance, and in everything connected with the liberal faith she took a deep interest. She was seldom absent from the Sunday School Conference, and her appearance was well known at the United Services in the Ulster Hall organized by the Belfast Laymen's League. Since the death of her niece, which occurred a few days before last Christmas, she very seldom went outside her home. Indeed her heart was buried in her niece's grave, and night and day her thoughts turned to her lost friend and companion. Less than two years ago, her brother died. There is now left only a nephew in the dwelling that housed so lately a happy family. The loyalty and faithfulness of Miss McRobert were an example to all. The unfailing regularity of her attendance encouraged others to value their privilege of public worship, whilst it put to shame the careless and indifferent. For her the words of the old psalm have a peculiar fitness:

> "The habitation of thy house,
> Lord, I have loved well.
> Yea, in that place I do delight,
> Where doth thine honour dwell."

Her remains were interred in the family burying-ground, Rademon, on Sunday evening June 3rd, in the presence of a very large crowd of sympathising friends and neighbours.

REPORTS.

Ulster District Women's League—The quarterly meeting was held at Dromore on June 16th. It was the first meeting at which Miss Eileen Andrews had not been present. Her loss was terribly felt. Mrs. Begg of Larne conducted the service beautifully and gave a sermon on "Peacemakers," which was peculiarly appropriate to the character of Miss Andrews. The funeral march was played most sympathetically. After an appreciation delivered by Miss Armstrong (President of the League) of the work of Miss Andrews, the members remained in silent prayer in memory of her. Miss Armstrong emphasised the devotedness of Miss Andrews to the League. She had been its first President, and after its first year its honorary secretary and treasurer. Self-effacement was the chief trait of Miss Andrew's character. Her work was always carried out with the greatest of thoroughness and attention to detail. She expressed her view of the great good the Women's League had done for the Church in general and the joy she had derived from it, shortly before her death. Always gracious, always considerate, and always calm, Miss Andrews was the ideal secretary. Her example and her deep conviction in the beauty and truth of Unitarianism will always remain to the members as a most beaut ful memory and inspiration. At the meeting which followed the service letters of sympathy were read from Mrs. Taylor, President of the Women's League, Rev. Rosalind Lee, the Hon. Sec., and Mrs. C. Severs, Chairman of the Central Committee. Miss Hind, cousin of Miss Andrews, has consented to be the Hon. Secretary, and Mrs. Glynne Davies the Assistant Hon. Secretary. These elections were confirmed by the meeting. A detailed report of the General Assembly meetings was given by Mrs. Forsythe, the delegate from the Ulster District League. The report was comprehensive and enlivened by humour. Mrs. Eustace Thompson, Miss Armstrong and Mrs. E. R. Jackson amplified the report, each giving her own impressions of the meetings. Next year the Assembly will meet in Liverpool. It is hoped that all branches will raise £3 so that a delegate from each branch can be sent to the meetings. Thanks to the speakers and to Dromore branch concluded a memorable quarterly meeting. The next quarterly meeting will be an unusually interesting one. Mrs. Mayes of Lisburn will conduct the service in Holywood on October 2nd, and afterwards a visit will be paid to Miss Praeger's studio and a talk will be given to explain Miss Praeger's work.

Domestic Mission—The Annual Flower Services were held in the mission on Sunday, June 10th. The church was artistically decorated for the occasion with flowers kindly donated by friends and mission members. Appropriate special music was rendered by the senior choir under the leadership of Miss F. Newman, A.T.C.L. The afternoon programme was given by the children of the Sunday School. A Hymn Board was presented to the Church by the pupils and received on behalf of the Management Committee by Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Hon. Secretary, who thanked the children for the appropriate token of their appreciation and regard for the opportunities provided for them through the agencies of the mission. Morris Cobain, one of our Sunday School pupils secured second prize in the junior class of the Sunday School Essay Competitions. The Sunday School Excursion provided by the kindness of the management committee, was held on Saturday, 16th inst, to Newcastle. The weather was all that could be desired so that teachers and pupils entered with enthusiasm into the spirit of the occasion. A varied sports programme carried out on the sandy beach, ample refreshments and joyous fellowship, combined to make the outing one to be remembered by all present. A mystery tour has been arranged by the Debating Circle for Friday evening, 29th June. Members and friends look forward to a pleasant evening together visiting some of the beauty spots adjacent to the city. A number of members of the Mission Branch of the Women's League attended the meeting in Dromore on 16th June, and report a pleasant and helpful gathering. Miss Montgomery has very kindly taken charge of the arrangements for the mother's holiday at Carnlough from July 21st to 28th. This will provide a welcome change and rest, for those who seldom find respite from the duties of home life. "We acknowledge with sincere thanks the following gifts during the month:—Mrs. Hay, Books and Magazines, Miss McGiffin, Pictures. W. E.

Mountpottinger Women's League—The Committee of the Mountpottinger Branch organised a special Women's League service which was held on Sunday evening, 27th May. Mrs. J. H. Ewbank conducted the Service, the subject of her discourse was taken from Mark 12th V. 42, from which she gave a beautiful lesson on embracing oppor-

tunities of performing acts of usefulness, however small, not waiting for a chance of doing great things. Mr. Shepherd, the organist, kindly arranged special music, two anthems being very nicely rendered by the choir, and a very pleasing item was a solo by Master Gerald McCullough, who has a beautiful soprano voice. There was a generous response to invitations to lady members of our country churches to act as special collectors. The members of the Mountpottinger League are greatly encouraged in their effort to augment the Church Funds, and are deeply grateful for the kind support of the large congregation which assembled. Tea was provided in the school-room after service for friends who could conveniently stay, which resulted in a very happy social gathering—K.F.

Newry—Three columns of the *Newry Reporter* contained an exceedingly able sermon by the Rev. J. Morley Mills dealing with the decision of the York Convocation with reference to Unitarians. The preacher considered that the struggle to-day was not between Unitarians and Orthodoxy, but between certain sections within Anglican and Nonconformist Churches themselves. A summary is given of the address by the Bishop of Liverpool in defence of Unitarians, and that in civil law the distinction between "Unitarian"and"Christian" had been banished long ago, and two historical cases concerning rights to property were cited. "All that Nicea could do was to conclude an intellectual process of definition, demanded by Greek thought! It could not take into account the inner essence of the soul's relation with the living Christ and its fruits in life." The Bishop of Ripon spoke in support of his brother of Liverpool. "There were Unitarians who in the fullest sense were devout Christians, and the resolution could not but be wounding to them." Only two of the fourteen bishops assembled declined to vote for the restricting resolution. But it should not be overlooked that it was a court of Bishops only. The lower ranks of the clergy were not consulted, nor were the educated laity. The decision of the court was: "That, as Unitarians do not accept the Nicene Creed in its entirety, nor baptise their children in the name of the Trinity, nor accept the dogma of the deity of Jesus, they cannot be considered to be Christians, and that henceforth none of their ministers may again be invited to preach or pray in an Anglican Cathedral or Church." [With reference to the clause relating to baptism, it is true that the term "Trinity" is not used. But our ministers have many of them, in their training, been advised to use the scriptural formula, "In the Name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost," as being of universal acceptance throughout the whole Christian Church. Until within two years ago the Old Catholic Church of Utrecht, which is now on fraternal terms with the Anglican Church, did not recognise Anglican Orders, which involved Anglican baptism, as being valid. It has been a matter of grave concern among many in the Church of England as to whether or not the orders of Archbishop Tait, who had been baptised a Presbyterian, were valid or not! The Church of England is treading on a morass when it challenges Unitarian baptism as being not Christian, and takes up an attitude of impudent assumption.—ED.]

Crumlin—The Minister baptised David Hall, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Hamilton, at their home, Lake View, Crumlin, on Sunday, 20th May.

NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND.

The annual meetings of the Church were held on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 19th and 20th, in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, and in the Central Hall. The annual Synod Lecture on "Our Place in the Great Christian Tradition," was given by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M A., B.D., of Liverpool, in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, on Tuesday evening to a large and appreciative audience. The Rev. J. J. Magill, B.A., presided.

On Wednesday morning at 10-30 the proceedings of the Synod began with a Communion Service, conducted by the Moderator, Rev. J. J. Magill. The Business Meeting followed, when the Rev. J. D. Davies of Moneyrea was elected Moderator of the Church for the next year, the Rev. J. Glynne Davies was appointed Hon. Treasurer, and the Rev. J. H. Ewbank, the Clerk. The reports of the Presbyteries, Sustentation Fund, Sunday School, and other Committee's were received.

In the evening a well attended and much appreciated Conversazione was held in the Central Hall, Belfast. Over two hundred guests were received by the Moderator (Rev. J. Dare Davies) and his wife. A musical

programme was contributed by Miss Millagan's orchestra, and the vocalists were Mrs. Murphy, Comber, Miss Adelaide Beattie and Miss Eileen Ervine of Belfast, and Mr. S. Weir McCormick of Bangor—all the items being thoroughly enjoyed. Refreshments were served by members of the First Church Women's League, assisted by members of other branches. The hall had been nicely decorated for the event. The Conversazione being a new venture, was anticipated with some anxiety, which happily was dispelled by the large number of people who attended. The event turned out a popular and enjoyable part of our Synod proceedings. The bright and interesting speech of the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, in reply to the Moderator's vote of thanks for the lecture, was much enjoyed.

SPURGEON CENTENARY!

The Synod week contains in it the centenary of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, born 1834 at Kelvedon, Essex. His grandfather was an Essex pastor, and his father an Independent minister in Islington. He died in 1892 at the age of fifty-eight, but in the course of a comparatively short life he had earned for himself the title of the Prince of Preachers. Dr. Martineau occasionally went to hear him, and was asked: "Why do you go to hear Spurgeon; you don't believe in what he preaches!" "No," replied Martineau, "but he does." It was the simple sincerity of Spurgeon, the great sense of reality that he gave, that was his chief attraction. He was a pastor at 17, having joined the Baptists, and for two years his first meeting-house was a thatched-roof chapel at Waterbeach, six miles from Cambridge, a village with a reputation for drunkenness and profanity, where Spurgeon's power was quickly felt. At twenty-one Spurgeon was the most famous preacher in London. His first chapel proved inadequate for the crowd that came to hear him. Exeter Hall, with capacity for 5,000, was not big enough, the Strand was blocked with those eager to hear him. Surrey Gardens Music Hall holding ten thousand, with accommodation for another ten thousand in the gardens, "where Spurgeon's organ voice found easy range," opened with a disastrous panic, caused by a malicious person raising the cry of "Fire!" resulting in some people being killed and many injured. Spurgeon was prostrate for days, indeed it is said that he never really recovered from the shock. For three years, until 1859, he continued his ministry there, never less than 10,000 present. Then followed the Metropolitan Tabernacle, built to seat 5,000 and crowded on Sundays to the end of his life in 1892. All built within six years of his coming to London. Then followed in addition the Spurgeon Orphanage, the Almshouse, twenty-two mission stations, twenty-seven Sunday and Ragged Schools. He was instrumental in building a hundred churches. Spurgeon narrowly escaped a college education. Dr. Angus, Principal of the Stepney (now Regent's Park) College, went to see him in the country, but Spurgeon missed him because the maid forgot to announce Dr. Angus. Spurgeon's style was that of John Bunyan, whose "Pilgrim's Progress" he had read a hundred times. In fact, as a boy being left to choose from his father's library, he had absorbed "Pilgrim's Progress," "Mansoul," and "Fox's Book of Martyr's," all of which we have a vivid recollection of in our juvenile reading. Would Spurgeon with his narrow philosophy and archaic style gain the same hearing to-day?

REVIEWS.

The Four Gospels,—A new translation by Charles Cutler Torrey, Professor of Semitic Languages in Yale University. Hodder and Stoughton, 1934—10/6.

Aramaic was the language in which Jesus and his disciples spoke and wrote. Evidently when the gospels were first circulated they were in this language, and from that were translated into Greek. "The invariably mechanical, word for word method of turning Semitic into Greek, employed at this early time, combined with the ambiguities inherent in a script which presented only consonants, leaving the vowels to be conjectured, made a certain amount of error unavoidable. It's very interesting to read this new version, with the R.V. or the Anthorised Version alongside, and to note the changes. The narrative in this new one is very clear and chains the attention, e.g. Luke 16—"He said also to the disciples; A certain rich man had a steward, concerning whom he had information that he was wasting his property. He summoned him, and said, What is this that I hear about you? Render the account of your stewardship; for you can no longer be my steward. . . . . Did the lord of the estate praise his faithless manager, because he had

acted shrewdly (for the sons of this world are more sagacious than the sons of light, in the dealings with their fellow men)? and do *I* say to *you*, Gain friends for yourselves with base lucre, so that when it is gone, you may be received into the eternal abodes? He who is faithful with little is faithful also with much; and he who is unfaithful with little is unfaithful also with much." This puts a very much clearer construction on an obscure passage, than the one gererally accepted. In fact it is a warning against such shrewdness. Right through the Gospels, many other passages are presented in fresh light. Contents: Preface,—Gospels,—Origin of the Gospels.—Notes on the New Readings. A good book to get into libraries. J.B.

The Ten Fold Reverence—Magnus C. Ratter. Lindsey Press. 6d.

The alternative title of the Theistic Church is "Church of the Universal Reverence," and in this book ten Reverences are given to supplement Sinaitic Commandments no longer adequate, and the book expounds each in turn. To select a few—

1. Thou shalt reverence the life that is within thee, the lives that are without, and the great life of God in which all is contained.

2. Do not needlessly hurt even a moth or a toad, do not thoughtlessly pluck a wayside flower, be kind to all animals: for all of them, insects, flowers and animals, have their lives and their joys.

3. Reverence one half-day as holy and keep it quiet, or this time, and a few minutes every day, take as subject for meditation: the Friendship of God, the Unity of Man, and the life eternal.

8. Never despair concerning progress, humanity or religion; hold fast to the reverence of All Saints (including St. Patrick—Ed.), the Buddha and the Christ, and search diligently till others equally noble are discovered.

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